

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A distribution management device comprising:

means for receiving via a network first order information of merchandise and second order information of said merchandise, the first order information being formed based on a first purchase request received via a first sales channel that uses the network and the second order information being formed based on a second purchase request received via a second sales channel which is a point-of-sale location that does not use the network;

means for generating stock control information to control a stock of said merchandise to be distributed to the first and the second sales channels based on the first and the second order information and indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase request was received;

means for ~~grasping~~ obtaining an actual sales condition of said merchandise in the first and the second sales channels based on the first and the second order information and the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel the purchase request was received; and

means for instructing a supplier of said merchandise to supply the merchandise based on the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel the purchase request was received.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): The distribution management device according to claim 1 wherein said means for instructing instructs the supplier to stop supplying the merchandise due to a sales debut of a new product during a predetermined period before the new product is released.

Claim 3 (Canceled).

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The distribution management device according to claim 1 wherein said means for receiving receives the first and the second order information via the Internet as said network.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The distribution management device according to claim 4 wherein said means for receiving receives the first and the second order information forming Web pages to be used in a World Wide Web service on said Internet.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A distribution management method comprising steps of:

receiving via a network first order information of merchandise, the first order information being formed based on a first purchase request received via a first sales channel that uses the network and receiving via the network second order information of said merchandise, the second order information being formed based on a second purchase request received via a second sales channel which is a point-of sale location that does not use the network;

generating stock control information to control a stock of said merchandise to be distributed to the first and the second sales channels based on said first and second order information received and indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase request was received;

~~grasping~~ obtaining an actual sales condition of said merchandise in the first and the second sales channel based on the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel the purchase request was received; and

instructing a supplier of said merchandise to supply the merchandise based on the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel the purchase request was received.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The distribution management method according to claim 6 wherein said ~~grasping~~ obtaining the actual sales condition and instructing the supplier of said merchandise comprise instructing the supplier to stop supplying the merchandise due to new product sales during a predetermined time period before a sales debut of the new product.

Claim 8 (Canceled).

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The distribution management method according to claim 6 wherein said receiving the first and second order information comprises receiving the first and the second order information via the Internet as said network.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The distribution management method according to claim 9 wherein said receiving the first and second order information comprises receiving said first and the second order information forming Web pages to be used in a World Wide Web service on the Internet.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A program storage medium for making a distribution management device execute a program comprising steps of:

receiving via a network first order information of merchandise, the first order information being formed based on a first purchase request received via a first sales channel

that uses the network and receiving via the network second order information of said merchandise, the second order information being formed based on a second purchase request received via a second sales channel which is a point-of-sale location that does not use the network;

generating stock control information to control a stock of said merchandise to be distributed to the first and the second sales channels based on said first and second order information received and indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase request was received;

~~grasping~~ obtaining an actual sales condition of said merchandise in the first and the second sales channels based on the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel the purchase request was received; and

instructing a supplier of said merchandise to supply the merchandise based on the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel the purchase request was received.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The program storage medium according to claim 11 wherein said ~~grasping~~ obtaining the actual sales condition and instructing the supplier of the merchandise comprise instructing the supplier to stop supplying said merchandise due to new product sales.

Claim 13 (Canceled).

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): The program storage medium according to claim 11 wherein said receiving the first and second order information comprises receiving the first and the second order information via Internet as the network.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): The program storage medium according to claim 14 wherein said receiving the first and second order information comprises receiving the first and the second order information forming Web pages to be used in a World Wide Web service on said Internet.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): A distribution management system comprising:  
a first order information forming device for forming first order information of merchandise based on a first purchase request received via a first sales channel that uses a network;

a second order information forming device for forming second order information of merchandise based on a second purchase request received via a second sales channel which is a point-of-sale location that does not use said network;

a distribution management device configured to receive the first and the second order information to be transmitted from the first and the second order information forming devices via said network, generate stock control information to control a stock of said merchandise to be distributed to the first and second sales channels based on said first and the second order information and indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase request was received, and ~~grasp~~ obtain an actual sales condition of said merchandise in the first and the second sales channels based on said first and second order information and the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel the purchase request was received; and

a module, at said distribution management device configured to instruct a supplier of said merchandise to supply the merchandise based on the stock control information indicating

through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel the purchase request was received.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented): The distribution management system according to claim 16 wherein said distribution management device is configured to instruct the supplier to stop supplying the merchandise due to a new product sales to the supplier during a predetermined period before a sales debut of the new product.

Claim 18 (Canceled).

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The distribution management system according to claim 16 wherein said distribution management device is configured to receive the first and the second order information transmitted from the first and the second order information forming devices via the Internet as the network.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The distribution management system according to claim 19 wherein said distribution management device is configured to receive the first and the second order information forming Web pages to be utilized in a World Wide Web service on the Internet transmitted from said first and the second order information forming devices.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The distribution management system according to claim 1, further comprising:

means for receiving an indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged at the point-of-sale location;

means for generating updated stock control information based on i) the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase request was received, and ii) the indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged; and

the means for instructing instructs the supplier to supply the merchandise based on the updated stock control information.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The distribution management method according to claim 6, further comprising steps of:

receiving an indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged at the point-of-sale location;

generating updated stock control information based on i) the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase request was received, and ii) the indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged; and

instructing the supplier to supply the merchandise based on the updated stock control information.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The program storage medium of claim 11, wherein the distribution management device executes the program further comprising steps of:

receiving an indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged at the point-of-sale location;

generating updated stock control information based on i) the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase

request was received, and ii) the indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged;  
and

instructing the supplier to supply the merchandise based on the updated stock control  
information.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented): The distribution management system according to  
claim 16, wherein the distribution management device is further configured to

receive an indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged at the point-of-  
sale location,

generate updated stock control information based on i) the stock control information  
indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase  
request was received, and ii) the indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged,  
and

instruct the supplier to supply the merchandise based on the updated stock control  
information.